

# Strive Today

*The Quarterly Publication of The Strive Group*

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## Just Arrived!

The Strive Group is pleased to announce our newest addition:

- > The Minooka Fulfillment Division  
256 Internationale Parkway  
Minooka, Illinois 60447
- > 52,000 square feet
- > Opened: June 18, 2007



*(Story continued on page 2)*

(Story continued from page 1)

On June 18, 2007, The Strive Group celebrated the opening of the newest addition to our ever-growing family – the Minooka Fulfillment Division. The new facility, encompassing over 52,000 square feet, employs a Strive Group team that will handle the majority of all display building and fulfillment services for Alberto-Culver, a long-time Strive Group client. The state-of-the-art facility features all-new equipment, including high-speed stretch wrapping, overhead scrap system, eight forklifts with

double-reach capability, racks and conveyors.

“The design and construction of the Minooka operation are world-class. The expertise provided by The Strive Group in managing this process has been outstanding. It is this type of collaborative effort with our strategic partners that will enable Alberto-Culver to achieve its goals,” Todd Rogers, Manager, External Manufacturing, Alberto-Culver.

Minooka Fulfillment operates similarly to our other Fulfillment

divisions in that it’s a dedicated service within a client’s facility. Because of the similarity, Minooka took advantage of the previous experience of many of the employees of the Fulfillment division, who helped in training efforts. Quality Manager Mercedes Gonzalez even “camped-out” in Minooka to assist in the transition. And newly hired Minooka employees spent time at other Fulfillment facilities learning the ropes, so that on opening day they could hit the ground running. It was a prime example of Strive teamwork at

its best. “This was an excellent opportunity to leverage internal resources, and some great camaraderie was formed in the process,” noted Randy Thrasher, general manager of Minooka Fulfillment.

Stop by for a visit if you’re in the neighborhood!



## Inside News

### The Strive Group and “Cool Globes – Hot Ideas for a Cooler Planet” Update

If you haven’t had the chance to check out The Strive Group-sponsored entry in the “Cool Globes – Hot Ideas for a Cooler Planet” City of Chicago public art project, you still have plenty of time – the globes are on display through September 2007. The Strive Group globe, entitled “Act on the Evidence,” by artist Lois Collins, is entry number 52 and occupies a prime location just off Lake Shore Drive near the south end of Grant Park, at the entrance to the Field Museum Campus. The official directory describes Lois Collins’s artwork as “chronicling the consequences the earth will bear as a result of human action or inaction. On one side, she conveys the despair of a world suffering from neglect and indifference, and on the other side, the elation of a world thriving as a result of care and respect.”

This exciting exhibit features over 100 sculpted globes and is a great opportunity to learn more about how you can help reduce global warming, as well as spend quality time with friends and family enjoying an afternoon on Chicago’s beautiful lakefront. For more information, visit [www.coolglobes.com](http://www.coolglobes.com).



Strive Group employees from left: Cori Crockett, Steve Haraf, Brian Guimbao, Aaron Hoyles

### Built on the Foundation of a Proud Past. Guiding a Promising Future.

During the past year, over 100 Strive Group employees volunteered for a very special purpose – a purpose that will help each of us achieve greater personal and professional success. This group, under the guidance of the corporate Human Resources team, has come up with a list of core values that reflect what is truly important to us as an organization. These are not values that change from time to time, situation to situation or person

to person, but rather are ideas and principles that endure, and embody the spirit of our company culture.

Look for posters, screen savers

and other items featuring Strive Core Values to start showing up in your facility. We hope everyone becomes familiar with these values and comfortable apply-

ing them in their daily lives. To make it easy, simply follow the I-Care Value System:

- I ntegrity: Display integrity with customers, colleagues and community
- C ommunication: Be in touch, and listen as much and as well as you speak
- A ccountability: Act like an owner
- R espect: Show respect, to build trust and teamwork
- E xcellence: Strive to give your best

# Extreme Makeover – Strive Style

Bright and early one cool spring morning, 11 Strive Group Rock Island Display Division employees embarked on a mission, a mission that culminated in a remarkable – and truly rewarding – accomplishment.

Rock Island high school football player Travis Hearn was critically injured last year in a football game, resulting in paralysis from the neck down. With skyrocketing medical bills and a house that could not accommodate his special needs, Travis and his family needed help. The outpouring from the community was overwhelming, and Rock Island Display employees wanted to contribute. So, a team of Strive Group employees, in collaboration with KWQC, the Quad Cities' NBC television affiliate, and Habitat for Humanity teamed up to build a house for Travis in ONE day. Their role in the project was to assist the support staff by manning entrances and exits and keeping the hectic and at times chaotic



The Strive Group team included (from left to right): Stacy Ford, Amy Young, Scott Young, Patt Padilla, Karen Wisely, Mary Jo Oliver, Nicole Hall, Randy Webster. Not pictured: Ann Kelly, Shari Johnson, Rowanna Williams.

flow of people moving so the house could be completed. Some team members even made the morning news and shared the fact that they worked at The Strive Group, Rock Island Display Division. After a 6:30 a.m. start, by 10:30 that evening, the house was completed – even the sod was laid in the

yard! Unbelievable! A few finishing touches are all that's left to make Travis and his family's new house a home.

What an excellent way to show the community that "Strive Cares." Thanks to all the volunteers!



## SAFETY ZONE

### ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION – WHY, WHERE, WHEN AND HOW

Accidents, unfortunately, do happen. Our goal is to change that. The purpose of investigating accidents is to influence procedural changes, promote continuous improvement and hopefully achieve a 100 percent accident-free workplace. This can be accomplished with proper investigative techniques and corrective action.

The less time lost between the time of an accident and the beginning of the investigation the better! This approach allows the investigators to observe actual conditions as they were at the time of the event, prevent the loss or disturbance of evidence, and identify potential witnesses. The tools that members of the investigating team may need are a pen, paper, camera, tape measure, statement forms, etc. These items should be readily available so that the investigation can begin immediately.

Information that needs to be uncovered by members of an investigation includes: Was a safe work procedure used? Were safety devices used and working properly? Was lockout/tagout used when necessary? Was the work area clear of scrap or other hazards? Was PPE used? Were the workers adequately trained to perform the function? Were the safe work rules enforced?

The ultimate goal of the investigation is to determine the root cause of the accident and what corrective actions need to be implemented to prevent it from occurring again. After all, when personal safety and productivity are at stake – it's well worth the time and effort.

## Rock Island Rows! The Great Cardboard Boat Regatta®



Front Row (from left to right): Bearl Bruffett, Allison Smith, Mike Webster  
Back Row (from left to right): Marty Peterson, Chris Parker and Katti Parker

A cardboard boat race? You bet. The Strive Group/Rock Island Display Division. A natural fit, and a winner, by any account.

Originating in 1974 at Southern Illinois University, The Great Cardboard Boat Regatta (GCBR) is a competition of skill, design, creativity, spirit and, what some might call, sheer insanity. For the first time ever, with Marty Peterson at the helm, The Strive Group/Rock Island Display Division

is testing the waters with what promises to be a formidable craft, *Li'l Smokey*.

### The Challenge

Design and build a human-powered boat made of corrugated cardboard that is capable of completing at least two trips around a 200-yard course.

### The Crew

Bearl Bruffett, Chris Parker, Katti Parker, Marty Peterson, Allison Smith and Mike Webster.

### Li'l Smokey

Technically superior and des-

igned for victory, *Li'l Smokey* was designed on a CAD (computer-aided design) system and constructed of more than 25 sheets of corrugated. The whimsical fire engine design measured over 14.5 feet long and featured multiple shields that incorporated the Strive Group logo for enhanced style and recognition.

### The Race

The race was held on Wednesday, July 4th, 2007, at Sunset Park – Potter's Lake, Rock Island, Illinois.

### The Result

Victory for *Li'l Smokey* and her crew. Out of 30 entries, *Li'l Smokey* captured the Vogue Award for "Most Spectacular"-looking boat. Congratulations to the crew and Rock Island Display! For complete information on the GCBR, visit [www.gcbr.com](http://www.gcbr.com).

## COLLEAGUE CORNER

**Rachell Ragan**  
Shipping and Receiving Clerk  
Edwardsville Fulfillment



**Hire Date:** November 2005

**Career Progression:** prior to joining The Strive Group, Rachell was employed as an order processor and then as purchasing agent/customer service for a military distributor.

### What She Likes About The Strive Group:

"I like all the people I work with. It's nice to work at a place where I feel like my boss and I are actually friends outside of the workplace. Also, I like all the group activities we do together. I've never worked anywhere else that does anything like that. The job itself is always challenging, keeping it interesting."

**Special Talents, Skills and Personal Attributes:** from Elizabeth Koesterer, shipping and receiving manager, and Rachell's boss – "Rachell is extremely resourceful. She has an excellent ability to multitask in our fast-paced environment. Rachell is always upbeat and willing to do whatever it takes to make The Strive Group succeed."

**Personal Interests:** "I like to read a lot. I also enjoy socializing with friends and traveling."

**Other:** a resident of Swansea, Illinois, and proud mother of two children, one of whom recently graduated from high school.

# Answering the Challenge

Helping ACH make a big splash with a new product line in an already crowded pool.

With the competition firmly established, ACH Foods was looking for something to differentiate its product and catch the eye of an overstimulated consumer at the point of purchase.

## Challenge

To successfully launch Weber® Grill Creations® seasonings and marinade mixes, ACH Food Companies needed:

- A creative design that would capture the equity of the Weber brand and create interest with both customers and consumers.
- Innovative display designs with common parts that could be used with a variety of product sizes and types.
- Displays at a price that could fit within the ACH budget.
- A prepacked display solution that would be easy to assemble at the store level.
- Flawless customer service and support.

## Solution

We responded with a customized solution:

- We developed multiple concepts that capture the essence of the Weber grilling experience. The concepts were also adapted for use in collateral materials and sales aids.
- We produced displays with common parts that could be customized to fit each product size/type by changing just a few components.
- We successfully accommodated established budget parameters.
- Strive developed a display that was easy to assemble and included user-friendly assembly instructions with each display.

The Strive team worked seamlessly together and responded with creative designs, innovative construction and flawless execution to exceed customer expectations.

## Result

The creative design of the displays successfully captured the essence of the Weber brand and helped to gain attention from customers, driving high customer acceptance of the shippers. As a result, ACH exceeded shipper display goals by 10 percent.

*“The Strive Group really added value to our marketing initiatives. Their creative thinking and incredible follow-through were instrumental in the success of this launch.”*

**Erica Williams**

Associate Brand Manager, ACH Foods



## Trend Talk

### A Conversation with Mark Dziarsk from Laga



*Strive Today* caught up with Mark Dziarsk, vice president of industrial design for Laga, a design and innovation partner to many of the world's leading corporations, at the 2006 In-Store Marketing Expo. Dziarsk is a celebrated commentator on design trends, innovation and the strategic value of design in the national media. He has earned over 100 U.S. product design and engineering patents and garnered numerous awards, among them the Industrial Design Excellence Award, *ID Magazine's* Annual Design Review Design Distinction award and the Appliance Manufacturer Excellence in Design award.

#### Why is the design factor so important when companies consider their in-store marketing strategies?

Many experts suggest that focusing on the consumer experience is the new way to go to market. I would suggest that it is the only way. The consumer experience begins in its most important form in the aisle when we buy a product and at home when we open and use the product. It's not what we see on TV or what we are being promised that matters anymore. Traditional push marketing techniques such as advertising and name branding are being replaced by the quality of the in-store and in-home experiences.

#### We're all seeing and reading about the growth, prevalence and significance of in-store marketing. How do you focus your clients on the design aspect of this trend?

I would argue that to succeed in the aisle we need to create “brand DNA” based on the form and execution of the displays, packs and actual products themselves. This idea of DNA suggests that all the touchpoints a consumer has with a brand result in an experience of similar look, feel, tone, manner, etc.

#### Does the design of a display really boost the sale of a product compared to it just being in line?

We know that 75–80 percent of all purchase decisions are made in the aisle. Sounds crazy, but it's true. Also, there is research that suggests that up to 95 percent of purchase decision-making is motivated by our subconscious. So how a brand looks and feels on the shelf may be the most important aspect of winning a sale. P&G calls this “The first moment of truth.”

#### We can chuckle at the latest beer commercial, but it does not make us want to buy the product. Can in-store marketing fall prey to the same ineffectiveness if a POP design tries to be cute and the idea strays from the goal of encouraging a sale?

Most in-store marketing does. Mimicking the advertising lead is an old-school way of thinking and going to market. The world has changed, but many agencies and companies still act and behave as if it's 1975. The new consumer is hyper-informed, can't be “sold,” does his or her own research and demands little short of “Love it!” as far as purchase criteria. Cost and channel distribution, while still important, have given the lead to design and emotional connects with products.

For future *Strive Today* suggestions, comments or general inquiries, please contact:

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